

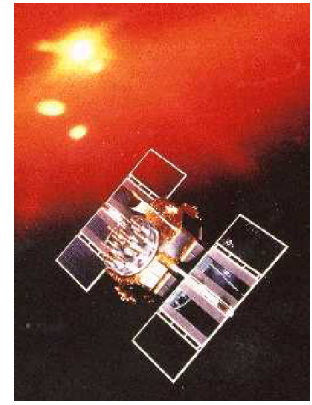
AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

by Major Dan Cappabianca

Space, the final frontier. Okay, you knew that line was inevitable, and would have been disappointed if I hadn't used it. Seriously, we in Air Force Space Command Financial Management are delighted to present ourselves to the rest of the FM community in this issue of The Air Force Comptroller magazine. Like many of you, I had no idea what AFSPC did before being assigned here. Yes, I sat through the AFSPC briefing in the big blue bedroom at SOS, but I had no idea of the scope or magnitude of the command's missions.

Before coming to AFSPC, I had only been assigned to flying wings. That meant I was reminded of the mission my fellow FMers and I supported every time I heard a plane take off. On several AFSPC bases, there isn't even a flightline, so we never hear the roar of jets. No, the hardware that represents our missions flies high above the earth, sits below ground in a silo, roars through the atmosphere as it breaks Earth's gravity on the way into space, or sits as silent sky-watching sentinels at remote locations around the world. Although we can't drive by the flightline and be visibly reminded of our missions, those missions are critical to the defense of the United States, North America, our NATO allies, and even worldwide navigation and commerce. Although none of our assets were shown on the nightly news in any of the conflicts of the past decade, none of the missions carried out by air breathing craft or land forces would have been possible without the constant presence of AFSPC warfighters.

AFSPC's missions can be generally broken down into Space, Launch, and ICBMs (although that is a bit oversimplified, and leaves some things out). Our flying hour program with 26 helicopters pales in comparison to the flying commands. However, we are a varied command, requiring financial expertise across



a broad range of issues, from DoD and commercial launch pricing and reimbursement programs, to major ICBM sustainment issues and leading edge of the Air Force space operations contracting issues such as total system performance responsibility (TSPR). Additionally, we partner with industry on a number of national and international programs. The breadth of operations in AFSPC is truly daunting. Day in and day out, we work side-by-side with Air Force Materiel Command, NASA, the National Reconnaissance Organization, and others to silently guarantee our freedom and that of so many others around the globe.

So, without further adieu, I'm pleased and proud to present the following articles from around this great and important piece of our Air Force.

As you close the cover on this issue, please take a moment to reflect on the vital missions we perform in AFSPC. I hope you now have a greater understanding of what this seemingly small, yet vitally important, command brings to the fight. While many wings around the Air Force conduct exercises to test their abilities to perform in the real fight, we in AFSPC are in the fight 24/7, 365 days a year. From providing the critical land-based piece of the nation's nuclear triad, to launching and operating a plethora of satellites critical to so many operations around the globe, AFSPC is your often-silent partner in protecting our great nation.